

Council Meeting – 28 September 2017

Agenda Item CC1774/17

Proposed MLX – expenditure to date and intentions

Introduction

Transport for London (TfL) took over responsibility for the Croxley Rail Link (CRL), now called the Metropolitan Line Extension (MLX) project from Hertfordshire County Council. This was to enable the expert delivery of the project with an increased budget. However, it has been reported that the project is now on the back burner due to insufficient budgets to complete the works and there are rumours that up to £130m has already been spent. As this is such an important project for the area, we consider that the Parish Council should attempt to clarify the position for the benefit of local residents.

Discussion

The proposed Croxley Rail Link (now MLX) has been under consideration for many years. It has been through many hoops and achieved planning through the Transport and Works Act and the local authorities. It was to be funded jointly by central government, Hertfordshire County and Watford District Councils. CGPC supported the project in principle, however Cllr Mitchell attended the Public Inquiry as an objector on behalf of the CGPC as we had concerns about the fair treatment of local businesses and organisations. After additional funds were allocated, TFL took over project management from Hertfordshire County Council to deliver the project with more experienced project management. However, the project is now on the back burner due to the cost of the proposed work having increased. There are press reports that up to £130m of the revised budget allocation of approximately £280m has already been spent.

Stage one of the contract, with Taylor Woodrow, has been completed. This means that there is a detailed design, services have been diverted, the track area cleared of trees and undergrowth, environmental pre-contract works have been completed and a new train bought and delivered. Stage two, the actual construction, was not let due to insufficient funds to meet the increased cost of construction. Construction would normally be the majority of the project cost. According to press reports £130m has already been spent. This appears high, in our view, for what has actually been achieved. As this is such an important project to the area, we consider that we should find out what has actually happened so far.

One action would be to submit a Freedom Of Information (FOI), request for the details of project budget and expenditure to date. We could also seek other avenues to try and get TfL to explain what has happened and what is planned.

Recommendation

To authorise the Parish Council to seek information from TfL and other bodies to find out what the CRL/MLX project budget has been spent on to date and what is planned for the future.